

TECHNICAL PROCUREMENT JUSTIFICATION

Agencies are required to purchase desktop computers, notebook computers, printers, servers and associated peripherals that are designated “low bid” unless a Technical Procurement Justification is submitted and approved by the Department of General Services, Purchasing Division.

The following guidelines should be followed in the development of an agency’s justification:

Justification Guidelines

- Each agency must submit a consolidated justification for the department or agency for each equipment group. Divisions within the agency may have different needs separate from the rest of the agency. These needs, however, should be reviewed on an agency-wide basis.
- The justification should have a long-term perspective similar to the three-year information systems plan. The justification must include the agency’s estimated volume of purchases over the life of the justification.
- The justification shall be assigned an expiration date in accordance with the specified contract period (not to exceed one year), shall remain in effect throughout said period, and shall become null and void upon the expiration date thereof. Agencies/departments may submit new justifications or updates for consideration at any time during the contract period.
- The justification should resemble a business plan. It should state the business of the agency, the current equipment configuration (i.e., number of Manufacturer X equipment), and the needs of the business that require a particular manufacturer’s equipment. Separate justifications are required for each equipment group.
- Justifications may be submitted as a two to three page memorandum, and may include charts and graphs. Agencies may revise their justifications, or submit new justifications, at any time.
- The justification should identify both hard and soft benefits and any associated costs or cost savings in the form of a cost analysis. For example: repair time and/or down time cost the agency x amount; increased productivity or efficiency saves x amount. Business justifications for justification may include, but are not limited to the following:
 - Technical support for one manufacturer’s equipment

- Value-added technology from one manufacturer's equipment
- Documented performance issues with one manufacturer's equipment
- Cost benefits of one manufacturer's warranty versus maintenance costs
- Compatibility with existing computer operating software when driven by cost savings, except when total replacement is needed for cycle changes
- If cost savings are driven by an embedded base, the agency must provide detailed grounds for such purchases. An embedded base will not be the sole reason for purchasing one manufacturer's equipment

Plans must have solid business justifications to be approved.

Process for Submission

- Technical Procurement Justifications must first be approved by the agency ISM Director or person serving in that capacity. Justifications should then be sent to the Purchasing Consultant (3rd Floor WRS Tennessee Tower) for logging and routing to OIR.
- OIR will review the technical portion of the justification and request additional information as needed from the agency.
- Upon completion of the technical review, OIR will submit its technical findings to Purchasing.
- Purchasing will review the justifications along with OIR's findings of the technical portion and may request additional information from the agency.
- Upon completion of Purchasing review of the justification, the agency will be notified of the outcome. If Purchasing does not approve the justification, the agency may resubmit the justification after addressing the issues identified.
- Approved justifications will be kept on file with General Services' Purchasing Division as a public document.
- Agencies/Departments requesting to purchase a particular manufacturer's product holding the 4th and 5th positions relative to the designated low bid must submit a comparison of costs for the requested products and the low bid products. This comparison must include the number of units to be purchased and a total dollar difference based on product prices for the

particular price cycle. The comparison must be signed by the agency ISM Director, or person serving in that capacity, and then submitted to General Services, Purchasing Division. Purchasing will pass the information, and a recommendation for consideration, to the Board of Standards Staff. Agency staff will be required to attend the Board of Standards' Staff meeting to respond to Staff inquiries. This recommendation will only go before the Board of Standards if there is a split decision between the Board of Standards Staff.

- Purchasing will submit a monthly report to the Board of Standards Staff in detail showing all approved Technical Procurement Justifications.
- A quarterly report will be submitted to the Board of Standards in detail showing all approved Technical Procurement Justifications.

PROCESS AND TIMELINE FOR SUBMISSION OF JUSTIFICATIONS

1. Agencies submit justifications to Purchasing Consultant, Purchasing Division at least 90 days before the expiration of the existing justification contract period or upon realization of need.
2. Justifications are logged into spreadsheet.
3. Justifications are routed to OIR for review of the technical portion.
4. OIR will submit its technical findings to Purchasing.
5. Purchasing will review justifications along with OIR's findings of the technical portion.
6. Purchasing may request additional information as needed.
7. Purchasing will notify agency of the outcome upon completion of its review.
8. The agency may resubmit the justification after addressing the issues identified by Purchasing.
9. Copies of approved justifications will be provided and kept on file with the Department of General Services.
10. Requests for a manufacturer's product holding the 4th and 5th positions relative to the low bidder must follow the aforementioned process as well as be submitted by General Services with a recommendation to the Board of Standards Staff for consideration.